IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1-3 and add new claims 11-14 as follows:

1. (Amended) A stereomicroscope comprising:

an illumination unit for illuminating a specimen with light;

a specimen setting board; and

a fitting member for fitting an objective lens, said illumination unit, said specimen setting board and said fitting member being disposed in sequence on an optical axis,

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wherein one of a predetermined a low-magnification objective lens and a higher-magnification objective lens than said low-magnification objective lens is selected and fitted as said objective lens to said fitting member,

said illumination unit includes a light source, a shield element for cutting off partially light beam emitted from said light source, first and second condenser lenses for converging the light beam passing said shield element on the specimen, and a mechanism for selecting one of said first and second condenser lenses and disposing said selected condenser lens on the optical axis,

said first condenser lens exhibits an optical characteristic of setting a position conjugate to an entrance pupil of said low-magnification objective lens fitted to said fitting member in a position of said shield element or in the vicinity of said shield element,

said second condenser lens exhibits an optical characteristic of setting a position conjugate to an entrance pupil of said high-magnification objective lens fitted to said fitting member in a position of said shield element or in the vicinity of said shield element, and

wherein the position conjugate to the entrance pupil of said low-magnification objective lens formed by said first condenser lens and the position conjugate to the entrance pupil of said higher-magnification objective lens formed by said second condenser lens are substantially same.

2. (Amended) A stereomicroscope comprising:

an illumination unit for illuminating a specimen with light;

a specimen setting board; and

a fitting member for fitting an objective lens, said illumination unit, said specimen setting board and said fitting member being disposed in sequence on an optical axis,

wherein one of a predetermined a low-magnification objective lens and a higher-magnification objective lens than said low-magnification objective lens is selected and fitted as said objective lens to said fitting member,

said illumination unit includes a light source, a shield element for cutting off partially light beam emitted from said light source, a first condenser lens for converging the light beam passing said shield element on the specimen, and a mechanism for moving said first condenser lens on and off the optical axis,

said shield element is disposed in a position of an entrance pupil or in the vicinity of this entrance pupil of said high-magnification objective lens as said objective lens fitted to said fitting member,

said first condenser lens exhibits an optical characteristic of setting a position conjugate to an entrance pupil of said low-magnification objective lens fitted to said fitting member in a position of said shield element or in the vicinity of said shield element.

3. (Amended) A stereomicroscope comprising:

an illumination unit for illuminating a specimen with light;

a specimen setting board;

a fitting member for fitting an objective lens; and

a zoom lens, said illumination unit, said specimen setting board, said fitting member and said zoom lens being disposed in sequence on an optical axis,

wherein said zoom lens includes a movable lens movable in a direction of the optical axis in order to change a magnification,

said illumination unit includes a light source, and a shield element for cutting off partially light beam emitted from said light source, and

said shield element is disposed in a position conjugate to an entrance pupil or in the vicinity of this entrance pupil of said objective lens when said zoom lens exhibits a lowest magnification.

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11. (New) A stereomicroscope according to claim 1, wherein the following conditions are satisfied:

$0.5 < (fH/dH) / (fL/dL) < 6.0$

$-0.1 < (1/|fL|) / (1/|dL|) < 0.1$

$-0.1 < (1/|fH|) / (1/|dH|) < 0.1$,

where fH is a synthetic focal length of the condenser lens for the high-magnification objective lens,

fL is a synthetic focal length of the condenser lens for the low-magnification objective lens,

dH is a distance along the optical axis from the center of the lens surface of the condenser lens for the high-magnification objective lens, and

dL is a distance along the optical axis from the center of the lens surface of the condenser lens for the low-magnification objective lens.

12. (New) A stereomicroscope according to claim 2, wherein the following conditions are satisfied:

$0.5 < (fL / dL) < 4.0$

$0.5 < (dS / dL) < 4.0$,

where fL is a synthetic focal length of the condenser lens for the low-magnification objective lens,

dL is a distance along the optical axis from the center of the lens surface of the condenser lens for the low-magnification objective lens, and

dS is a distance along the optical axis from the specimen surface on the specimen setting board to the shield element.

13. (New) A stereomicroscope according to claim 10, wherein the reflectance of said shield element decreases continuously from a tip end thereof toward an inner portion thereof.

14. (New) A stereomicroscope according to claim 10, wherein the reflectance of said shield element decreases stepwisely from a tip end thereof toward an inner portion thereof.